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New homes for Navajos in the Former Bennett Freeze Area nearing

WINDOW ROCK – On Thursday, members of the Navajo-Hopi Land Commission announced that funding has been processed and is now available to purchase 17 manufactured homes for Navajo residents of the Former Bennett Freeze Area.

According to Council Delegate Walter Phelps (Cameron, Coalmine Canyon, Leupp, Tolani Lake, Tsidi To ii), the NHLC approved Resolution NHLCJY-20-13 last July, which allowed the use of approximately \$1 million from the Former Bennett Freeze Area Escrow Fund Budget to purchase the homes.

“This marks a very significant achievement that will bring homes to families who were identified as most urgent and in serious need in the Former Bennett Freeze Area,” state Delegate Phelps who chairs the NHLC.

Members of the NHLC, the NHLC Office, and the Navajo Nation Department of Justice negotiated and finalized a contract to purchase the 17 homes from a company called Living Life Easy, LLC.

NHLC member Council Delegate Lorenzo Curley (Houck, Klagetoh, Nahata Dziil, Tsé Si áni, Wide Ruins) said although the funding was approved last year, the process to make the funds available which included establishing an account through the Office of the Controller took time.

“It was a difficult and lengthy process, however, we are now very close to providing much needed homes for those people who are most in need,” Delegate Curley said.

Raymond Maxx, executive director of the Navajo-Hopi Land Commission Office, said he is hopeful that the homes will be available to families within one month, while explaining that his office collected information and data to determine the recipients of the homes.

“Our staff conducted surveys and based off of their findings we determined which individuals were most in need,” stated Maxx.

“It’s a good start,” said NHLC member Council Delegate Jonathan Nez (Shonto, Navajo Mountain, Oljato, Ts’ah Bii Kin). “This is another step toward empowering the people in that area and hopefully it continues to revitalize and create prosperity within the region.”

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